

Problems of Cultural Tourism Development and Trends of its Development in the City of Samarkand

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Abstract: The global spread of the outbreak of a new coronavirus disease (COVID-19) in early 2020 has seriously affected the tourism sector. In the period from January 2020 to May 2021, the number of international tourist arrivals decreased by 56%. The Asia-Pacific region suffered the most: during the same period, the number of tourists decreased by 60%. The United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) estimates that the overall reduction in the number of international tourist arrivals worldwide in 2023 could range from 58% to 78%, depending on when travel restrictions are lifted. This will lead to the loss of export revenues from tourism in the amount of \$910 to \$1.2 trillion and could endanger up to 120 million jobs in the tourism industry. It is expected that although domestic tourism will recover faster, regional and international travel will not show any signs of recovery until 2025

Keywords: coronavirus, UNWTO.

The COVID-19 outbreak has shifted travelers' priorities towards closer, safer and less crowded places. Thus, domestic and regional tourism has become a more popular alternative. More and more tourists are now paying more attention to the "ecological footprint" and the socio-economic consequences of their travels. Tourists are increasingly giving preference to destinations and businesses with a clear sustainable development policy, recycling procedures and a circular economy, and interest is also growing tourism products and experiences that can help protect the environment and bring tangible benefits to local communities. The traditional motivation to relax away from home is on the decline. Instead, tourists are looking for unique experiences, learning new things during the journey and spending an unforgettable time at their destinations through interaction with local residents and immersing themselves in the local culture, history, cuisine and traditions of the country.

Cultural and educational tourism is one of the most common types of tourism today. Tourism affects all spheres of society, including culture, economy, and social life. The intensity of tourist development and the scale of tourism largely depend on the recognition by the world community of the value of the cultural and natural potential of the country and its heritage. To recognize the significance of the country as a great power, the role of heritage, cultural values created by the people over a long period of its existence, becomes decisive.

Until about the 80s of the last century, cultural and educational tourism occupied a relatively insignificant niche in the tourist market. Today, the world Tourism Organization has estimated the scale of this activity in 2021 at 47% of the total number of trips, and its annual growth at 17%. The main task of cultural and educational tourism is to raise the cultural level of people during the trip, to satisfy their cultural needs.

The issue of introducing a modern person to the cultural and historical potential of the country through tourist trips around the country, acquaintance with the main cultural centers of Uzbekistan, such as Samarkand, is becoming urgent. In cultural and educational tourism, what is personally seen becomes a personal possession for a person, belonging to thoughts and feelings. The modern tourist is in demand for a unique experience, highly focused on his individual

abilities and capabilities, the need for creative self-expression of his individuality.

Due to the accelerated pace of life, when the way of life is radically changing before the eyes of one generation, the number of people experiencing discomfort in modern conditions is increasing, not keeping up with the changes, or regretting the loss of roots, the interruption of traditions. Nostalgia for the past, growing in acuteness and in the number of people experiencing it, stimulates visits to places that create conditions for emotional relaxation for some, since they have preserved features and are associated with pleasant life memories. For others, it is a form of maintaining ties with traditions, feeding the roots. With the increasing sophistication of tourists, their dissatisfaction with the impersonal standard tourist offer is growing, which does not take into account individual requests and therefore does not provide for a long time memorable and meaningful memories, getting emotionally vivid. The modern tourist is in demand for a unique experience, highly focused on his abilities and the need for creative self-expression of his individuality, individual capabilities/

For the successful implementation of this task, it is necessary to create a unique image that helps the regions to differ in something special from other equally attractive tourist centers, to differentiate themselves, including at the expense of the most valuable cultural heritage of the territory. Awareness of the need to preserve cultural diversity, expands the prospects of cultural tourism as a factor of regional development in the context of globalization

In the framework of the World Conference on Cultural Policy in 1972, a recommendation on the issue of cultural tourism was adopted. The principles of cooperation in the field of culture and tourism are reflected in the declarations adopted in Mexico City (1981) and Manila (1980).

The development of tourism and the preservation of historical and cultural heritage are two interrelated areas of joint activity of society and the state. An important condition for the success of this activity is the involvement in the tourism sector of the entire diversity of cultural heritage located in each region.

For the successful implementation of this task, it is necessary to create a unique image that helps our region differentiate itself, differ in something special from other equally attractive tourist centers of Uzbekistan, including due to the most valuable cultural heritage of its territory. It is necessary to develop cultural tourism as a separate, independent direction in tourism, and not as an additional bonus to historical, religious, entertainment and other types of tourism. Historical monuments, beautiful scenery, high mountains, magnificent lakes — all this is available in many countries, and to some extent have already lost great interest among tourists who are looking for innovations in their travels. And we must offer them this "something new": not only to acquaint them with the unique traditions and customs of our people, but to make them witnesses and even participants of colorful traditional holidays, festivals, festivities, rituals; teach them local crafts, cook national dishes, etc.

To determine the demand for cultural tours among foreign tourists visiting Uzbekistan, a marketing study was conducted by means of a questionnaire survey of foreign tourists visiting Samarkand. 1,600 people took part in the survey,

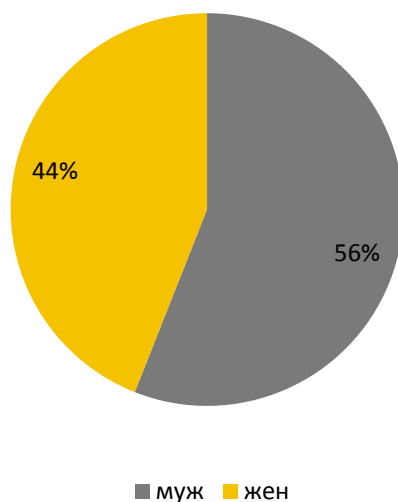


Figure - 1 Analysis of the sexual composition of tourists. 56% of tourists are men, and 44% are women.

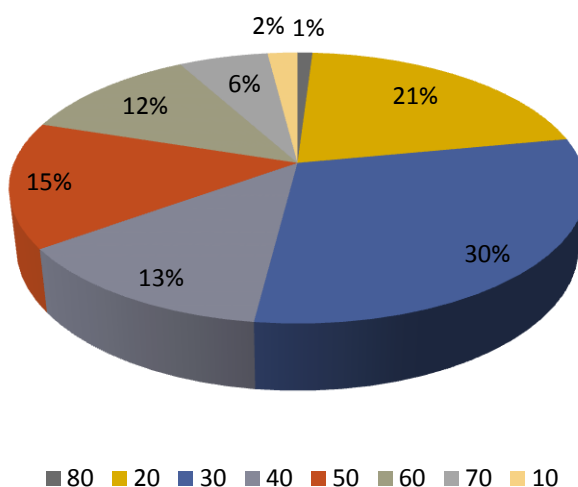


Figure - 2 Analysis of the age composition of tourists.

The majority of tourists are 51 % young. The analysis of the age composition of tourists shows that tours should be made taking into account the peculiarities of youth preferences.

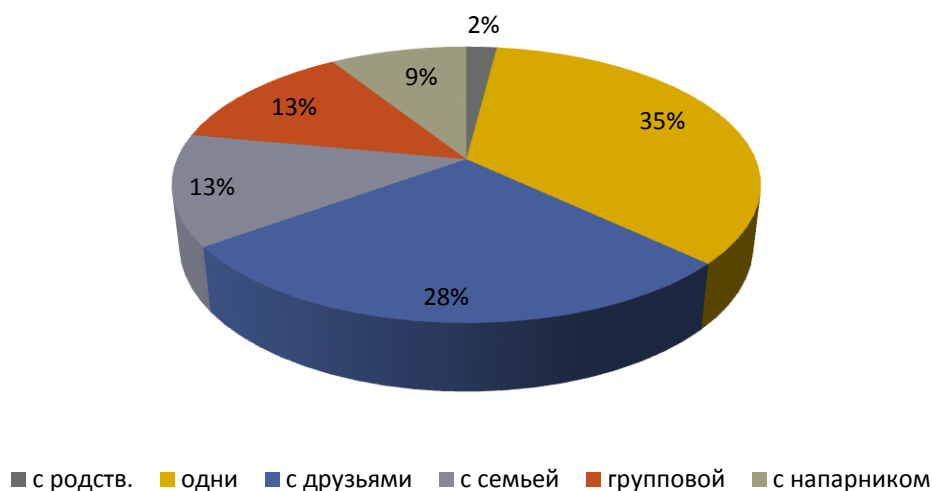


Figure - 3 Analysis of the structure of tourist groups

28% of tourists prefer to travel with friends, 35% of tourists want to travel alone. A group tour and a family tour were preferred by 13% of tourists. Only 2% of tourists preferred to travel with relatives. The analysis of the structure of tourist groups shows that it is necessary to focus on individual tours.

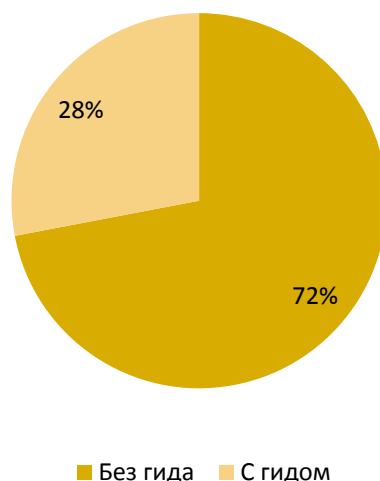


Figure - 4 Analysis of the share of organized tourism

72% of tourists prefer to travel without a guide, and the remaining 28% with a guide. Thus, tourists received basic information about their places of stay while traveling in Uzbekistan from local residents, guides - (35.1%)

The main motive for visiting Uzbekistan by foreign tourists is an interest in history and culture, lifestyle, the possibility of exchanging views with residents, the prospect of seeing an "unknown" country. And 68.3% of respondents expressed a desire to go on "similar tours". They noted that tourists have been preparing for their arrival in our country for at least 3-11 months – 57% of respondents. 47.5% of respondents noted that older people come in group tours. The number of individual tourists is increasing – 20.2% of respondents are tourists who have ordered an individual tour. These tourists, of course, study information about our country in advance. The choice of visiting our country was influenced by such factors as "travel safety in Uzbekistan" (24.6%), "attractive prices" (20.2%) and "posts about Uzbekistan on social networks", "identity and culture of Uzbekistan described in travel guides, brochures of travel agencies, television programs" - (56%). This suggests that more and more young and elderly people are overcoming spatial barriers in the hope of joining a different culture, gaining new knowledge and impressions. At the same time, 91% of respondents believe that information (primarily ethnographic and cultural guides) and advertising materials are clearly insufficient." Although tourists take the main information about Uzbekistan from travel guides (52.9%), travel agency websites (30.3%), hotel booking websites (Expedia, Booking.com etc.) (10.6%), site review (TripAdvisor, etc.) (18.2%), social networks (7.4%).

The study also allowed us to identify a number of common problems hindering the development of the tourism industry: unsatisfactory infrastructure development. There are no restaurants where dishes of other national cuisines are prepared – (12% of respondents), there are no nightclubs, bars – (9.5%), there are no restaurants with vegetarian cuisine - (11.8%), there are no cafes serving freshly brewed coffee – (17.2%), transport accessibility problems (not fixed taxi prices – (27.7%), no information on how to book and buy a train ticket/train schedule – (20.8%), no information on how to catch a taxi – (18.8%), no permanent taxi stands); limited human resources and lack of professionalism among employees of hotel and shopping complexes - 76% of respondents noted that employees do not know foreign languages, low level of service, there is no free Wi-Fi – (46.5%), there is no indication of the location of public toilets – (28.5%), there is no information about post offices - (9.4%) and laundries outside hotels – (4.8%),

international courier parcel delivery services – (3.8%).

From the point of view of meeting the need for novelty, the cultural tourist product of Uzbekistan meets this requirement of the Western tourist, because in our country there is a unique culture, a rich history, with all its artifacts in the form of national costume, national cuisine, objects, style and spirit of national life, folklore and ritual that has always attracted foreigners. Uzbek restaurants popular among the local population attract 25.7 % of tourists. 70.6% of tourists prefer to stay in national-style hotels. The design of national design and aesthetics of interiors in the design of public places, restaurants, cafes, clubs, as well as musical, visual and performing cultures has significantly increased. Local residents open national houses, where they provide a package of services with master classes in cooking, showing national and religious rituals of local residents.

These problems contribute to a decrease in the tourist flow, the profitability of the tourism sector, and also reduce the investment attractiveness of the tourism industry.

A big problem is the lack of awareness of potential tourists about the country in general, and about the tourist product in particular. Tourists do not know about the cultural tours that exist on the territory of Uzbekistan. Uzbekistan has practically no permanent tourist offices abroad. And unfortunately, our country remains outside the active tourist map for the time being. Our country is perceived as an interesting, but unexplored and unsafe place. This fact underlines that Uzbekistan is not well represented in the international tourism market, and this can be considered as a serious problem and it must be solved at the state level.

It was revealed that a big problem is the lack of awareness of potential tourists about the country in general, and about the tourist product in particular. In Samarkand, out of 45 tourist companies, only 12 are engaged in cultural tours. Analysis of the websites of these companies showed that cultural tours are monotonous. A standard set of monuments, entertainment, directions of routes. Tours do not take into account nationality, the needs of tourists and the moments where they can be diversified. For example, for Spanish, French, and German travelers, you can show the gardens of Timerlane, which are described by the Spanish ambassador Clavijo, whose manuscripts are kept in Spanish, French, and German museums. For Russian tourists, you can show the Russian architecture of the 18th century, churches, national houses of famous Russian merchants, diplomats, of which there are more than 48 houses in the central part of the city and which are listed in the UNESCO World Heritage. For Japanese tourists, you can show the preserved Buddhist temples on the territory of the city.

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Cultural tourism, focused on satisfying the interests of both tourists and the local community, should actively involve the local population, state and local authorities, and the education sector in solving the problems of cultural tourism. Successful projects in this direction include the experience of Belleville (France), where local residents actively participate in accompanying tourists as guides; tourist programs have been developed that involve local residents in sightseeing activities. Of course, such forms of participation of residents in cultural tourism have always been and are in Samarkand, but rather, they are of a private nature and have not yet been institutionalized. In this regard, it is necessary to conduct advertising campaigns, information tours with the involvement of tourism specialists, teachers and students of relevant specialties. And also take an active part with visual, colorful and educational guides in international

conferences, exhibitions on tourism and other events in order to popularize cultural tourism. Despite the fact that almost any information can be obtained from printed periodicals, fiction and other sources, the old truth does not age: "It is better to see once than to hear a hundred times." Therefore, a region interested in attracting tourists should reasonably plan and develop special programs and activities that increase interest in its culture, disseminate information about its cultural potential in order to attract potential tourists.

The criterion of novelty of a cultural tourist product implies a sense of strangeness, unconventionality, non-standardness, difference from one's own culture. Consumers' expectations are associated with feelings of surprise, shock, admiration, delight from the discovery of a new one. According to the researchers, the novelty construct has four interrelated dimensions: excitement (thrill), departure from routine (change from routine), boredom relief (boredom allowance) and surprise.

Once again, we emphasize that it is the residents of the city who form impressions of the culture and identity of the place, create its atmosphere. The growing interest of the local population in the creation of cultural goods is a necessary condition for the development of the entire infrastructure of cultural tourism (including cultural industries). Samarkand has a very developed sense of history and its own uniqueness, the city is proud of its unique cultural heritage and rich cultural landscape. Modern trends in the development of urban space are being actively implemented in the historical center of the city. The traditional classical architecture of Samarkand, which has shaped the image of the city in the international space, also creates a number of advantages, including in terms of modern cultural products.

The answers of the questionnaire survey of tourists were studied, on the basis of which the main promising directions of tourism development were clarified. The main priorities of the tourism industry for the development of cultural and educational tours are considered

Cultural tourism is a lever of self-financing of heritage, acts as a source of non-budgetary investments in new research, revival, preservation of monuments of tangible and intangible heritage, natural attractions, stimulates, in particular, folklore, the maintenance of other scientific, cultural, ethnic traditions, folk crafts and crafts. Properly organized cultural tourism will contribute to the improvement of social conditions and increase the purchasing power of the population, the rise of science, culture and the general economic situation.

The main tourist product of the Samarkand region is the historical and cultural heritage and traditions of the Uzbek people. In Samarkand, all the monuments of these eras have been preserved, many of which are listed as UNESCO architectural monuments. Many tourists from CIS countries wish to create nostalgic tours in this direction in their answers.

Taking into account the trends in the development of the world market, the following main types of tourism in the Samarkand region can be distinguished:

- 1) Pilgrimage tourism - there are pilgrimage sites of representatives of three concessions in Samarkand, which attracts pilgrims from all over the world.
- 2) Tourism on the Great Silk Road, representing various variations of routes of historical, cultural and ethnographic orientation, as a rule, having transit passage through the territory of Uzbekistan (7-14%).
- 3) Ecological tourism in the Samarkand region there is a Zaravshan reserve with the presence of unique plant and animal resources.
- 4) Tourism of the era of Turkestan and the Soviet Union, which is of great interest to the Russian-speaking audience, residents of the CIS countries.

These types of tourism are the most promising until 2021, as they are attractive to tourists and have a high economic return on investment in a short period of time.

To achieve the main goal, it is necessary:

- improving the management system of the tourism industry at all levels, ensuring a permanent, equal and mutually beneficial dialogue through the development of a horizontally and vertically integrated institute of social partnership: state private sector local communities to ensure equal opportunities, transparency and coordination of the parties
- ' activities – development and implementation of a marketing strategy for the development of the tourism industry
- creation of a favorable administrative and legal environment to attract internal and external investments in the development and modernization of the infrastructure of the tourism industry
 - improvement of the training system for tourism and the development of human resources.
 - development and implementation of advertising and information programs on inbound and domestic tourism, including the creation of cycles of TV and radio programs for Uzbekistan from abroad, as well as regular advertising and information campaigns in the media
 - publishing catalogs, booklets, posters, maps and other advertising and informational printed products
 - organizing and holding international tourism exhibitions
 - ensuring the activities of foreign tourism missions that perform the functions of advertising and information offices within the framework of the activities of trade missions of Uzbekistan
 - organizing a network of information centers for foreign and Uzbek tourists in places where the largest tourist flows
 - conducting study tours of the tourist centers of the city of Samarkand for foreign journalists
 - organization of presentations of tourist opportunities of the city of Samarkand in the main countries sending tourists.

One of the important points is the reconstruction and construction of the following facilities for tourist purposes - the Samarkand Botany Garden, the Jambai Nature Reserve, the Rowing Canal in the Samarkand district, the Urgut Chinor Bogi, Ming Archa and the creation of a competitive environment conducive to improving the quality of tourist services and expanding their range.

Of course, it is necessary to constantly monitor and improve the legislative framework that contributes to the creation of favorable conditions for tourists from far and near abroad to stay in the republic, as well as for investing in the tourism industry.

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